

REMARKS

I. General.

In the office action dated July 6, 2006, claims 18-21 and 24-26 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, first paragraph as failing to comply with the written description requirement. For the reasons that follow, Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration and withdrawal of the 35 U.S.C. § 112, first paragraph rejection of claims 18-21 and 24-26.

Claim 22 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 3,438,416 to Thurston (hereinafter referred to as “Thurston”) in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,626,449 to McKinlay (hereinafter referred to as “McKinlay”). For the reasons that follow, Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration and withdrawal of the 35 U.S.C. § 112, first paragraph rejection of claims 18-21 and 24-26.

II. Substance of the Interview on November 7, 2006.

On November 7, 2006 a telephone interview was conducted between Dana Andrew Alden and Flemming Saether. During the interview the rejection of claims 18-21 and 24-26 was discussed. Examiner asked Applicant to file a supplemental response and point out the locations in the application as filed whereat “fastener” was recited. Additionally during the interview, the rejection of claim 22 was discussed. Applicant pointed out that the Examiner’s combination of references did not render the claim unpatentable. Examiner asked Applicant to file a supplemental response.

III. The 35 U.S.C. § 112, first paragraph rejection of claims 18-21 and 24-26 should be withdrawn.

With respect to Applicant’s use of the term “fastener,” Applicant respectfully points out that the term fastener appears throughout the specification, such as, for example, on page 1, lines 5-7 and page 5, lines 19-23, as well as in the title of the invention. Accordingly, for at least this reason, Applicant respectfully requests that this rejection be withdrawn.

IV. The 35 U.S.C. § 103 rejection of claim 22 should be withdrawn.

Briefly, Applicant points out that the relatively shallow scalloped cutaway areas 36 of Thurston are not “slots.” Because the combination of references do not teach all the elements of claim 22, claim 22 is not rendered unpatentable by virtue of any prior art. Accordingly, Applicant respectfully requests that the Examiner withdraw this rejection.

V. Applicant would appreciate the Examiner considering the following references contained in the IDS received on 6.29.2006.

Applicant has reviewed the IDS received at the USPTO on 6.29.2006 and would appreciate the Examiner's consideration of the following references.

1. U.S. Patent No. 292,063
2. U.S. Patent No. 367,196
3. U.S. Patent No. 738,217
4. U.S. Patent No. 752,628
5. U.S. Patent No. 827,562
6. U.S. Patent No. 889,593
7. U.S. Patent No. 948,326
8. U.S. Patent No. 1,015,059
9. U.S. Patent No. 1,040,215
10. U.S. Patent No. 1,140,974
11. U.S. Patent No. 1,297,845
12. U.S. Patent No. 1,622,581
13. U.S. Patent No. 1,952,305
14. U.S. Patent No. 2,210,455
15. U.S. Patent No. 2,253,241
16. U.S. Patent No. 2,783,810
17. U.S. Patent No. 2,562,032
18. U.S. Patent No. 3,078,899
19. U.S. Patent No. 3,417,802
20. U.S. Patent No. 3,693,685
21. U.S. Patent No. 3,851,690
22. U.S. Patent No. 3,942,570
23. U.S. Patent No. 4,339,179

24. U.S. Patent No. 4,377,361
25. U.S. Patent No. 4,812,095
26. U.S. Patent No. 4,941,787
27. U.S. Patent No. 5,141,374
28. U.S. Patent No. 5,409,338
29. U.S. Patent No. 5,984,602
30. U.S. Patent No. 6,135,689
31. U.S. Patent No. 6,776,565
32. US Pub. No. 2002/0039522A1
33. German Patent No. DE 298 15 492 U
34. German Patent No. DE 199 56 287 A

VI. Conclusion.

Applicant submits that the subject matter of the present application is novel, non-obvious, and useful, and, therefore, respectfully requests prompt consideration and allowance of the application.

Dated: November 8, 2006

Respectfully Submitted,
/Michael Pruden/
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